

Corvette Club



South Australia



MAY 2024 Newsletter
EVENTS EDITION

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Not the Canberra Nationals 2024

Sounds like a Monty Python movie, but somehow with multiple Nationals being lost due to Covid, there was no 2024 Nationals organised. The Canberra Corvette club decided to hold an informal weekend in lieu, during Easter 2024.



Two C3's and a C4 headed off on the Wednesday, but that was quickly cut when 'lucky' Dale blew a tyre and spun into a stone wall. Dale being used to Corvette disaster just sent the car home on a truck and jumped into Alan's C3 and they headed off with Andrew in his C4. Sean & Kirsty, Catherine & Jim, Peter & Lynda and Wombat & Norene assembled at Taillem Bend on Thursday morning for the 2 day trek. Armed with the new club CB radios, it was a professional looking and sounding group that headed off towards Balranald. After a lunch break at Ouyen we were off again and rolled into Balranald late arvo. It must have been a thirsty drive as Pete and Jim were into the refreshments straight away. As luck would have it, the Motel was right next door to the RSL, how lucky was that ?



Day 2 saw us execute 2 U turns before we even got out of town, which is impressive considering there is only one way in and out of Balranald. Things were humming along nicely until the first 'Jimmy stop' and McGarrett's battery decided to expire. Luckily Wombat had his little lithium jumper pack, and we were off again. We stopped at Hay for lunch, then decided to stop at the big 'servicecentre' at Yass - oh my god, must have been school holidays, it was bloody chaos. Then we took off the wrong way and had to do another U turn.

Eventually we got into Canberra, along with all the other traffic caught behind a caravan and a Tesla.

Once we were booked into the Pavilion on Northbourne, we went to the central bar area and promptly re arranged all the furniture. The Canberra club put on a meet and greet with some finger food, then we went back out and seeing that the staff had re arranged the furniture back to where it was, we promptly proceeded to re arrange it again. The RACV attended to McGarrett and declared that it was dirty terminals. Kirsty said, nope - that was too easy.

Day 3 everyone was assembling for the cruise to Araluen Hotel. My first job was to test start McGarrett, yep Kirsty was right. Battery dead flat again. RACV come back! Someone else had a flat tyre, so the RACV guy was busy, but we all got done and the 0930 take off time was met. It was going to be a day of miracles, as we headed out of the city we hit the RBT site. Somehow Jim passed with flying colours.

We were told the road down into Araluen was a "spirited drive". If you could imagine Chain of Ponds road narrower, tighter, full of potholes and giant wombats, then that described this road. We all made it alive and had a nice roast meat meal at the pub as a reward.

Saturday night dinner was a short walk away to the local football club, with the weather still being warm. Then back to the Hotel for a few more drinks.

Sunday morning saw everyone ready to go in the carpark, as we headed off to the Cotter Reserve outside of Canberra. As we were cruising along Canberra Boulevard, I realised that there was three C7 Z06's in a line, not a common occurrence in Australia. A quick stop outside of town gave Alan the opportunity to climb under the back of his car looking for a clunking noise.



As all the Corvettes were roaring along the windy road, it suddenly turned to dirt! Another U turn was executed and the correct turn off found. Lucky we were being led by the locals. The Canberrans put on a BBQ for us at the reserve, and we got a preview of the 2025 Nationals to be held in Parkes NSW. After lunch we went for a walk along the creek to the dam, this is actually where all of Canberra's water comes from. After that it was back to the Hotel to rearrange the furniture again and make plans for a dinner outing.

My brother and his wife who live in Canberra had joined us and they were put to work as our local guides. Luckily the tram stop was just outside the Hotel, so we climbed aboard and headed into the city. First stop was a gin bar with very special prices. Then off to another pub, then into the eating district. Found a trendy pub eatery and sat down to a meal. Time to leave and off we went, as we were walking down the street someone looked at Wombat carrying a handbag and asked the obvious question - are you missing something? Yes, he had in fact left Noreene at the pub. Back to the tram, back to the Hotel, back to re arranging all the furniture as more and more Corvette people joined the ever growing circle. The staff at the Pavillion would have been glad to see the back of us!

Monday morning and Canberra was covered in fog as we headed off. The other guys were heading back via Cooma. Pete and Lynda were staying on at the Hotel. We were at the highway in NSW before the fog cleared. As we got out on the plains, it was 36 degrees all the way across the Hay plains until we got to Balranald. It ended up being a warm 638 km drive. We had a drink and then headed next door to the RSL.

Day 6 of Corvette captivity saw rain overnight so the cars needed a quick chamois to clean them up before heading to the B12 to start the last leg home. We even managed to pass fruit fly inspection. The last stop was OTR at the Bend, well that was a mistake, bloody chaos again, families and kids everywhere. I guess we learnt that it's probably best not to have the Nationals at Easter.

Canberra, or There and Back Again by Andrew Catford

The Corvette Club of South Australia was off to Canberra for the Not-The-Nationals National Convention. Desiring to arrive a day early — and requiring a slightly more relaxed pace on account of the fuel economy and additional concentration demanded by left-hand drive C3s — Alan Litchfield, Dale Goldsmith, and myself travelled to Canberra separately to the official Club contingent.

Wednesday 27 March: Adelaide to Hay

As it was a weekday and I live in the Ghetto (Elizabeth), Alan and Dale decided it would be quicker and easier for them to get onto the Northern Connector and meet me at Munno Para Bunnings, than it would be for me to travel across the city to the bottom of the South Eastern Freeway.

We agreed to meet at 8am. Somehow, I got stuck behind a tractor doing 40 kilometers per hour and was the last to arrive. Given the volume of roadworks further up North, the morning's plan was to head to Nuriootpa and Angaston, and then across to Swan Reach, Loxton, and stop in Mildura for lunch.

Approximately an hour into our journey we had just passed through Keyneton and were heading toward Sedan. At this point the road becomes a reasonably steep and winding descent. Unfortunately, upon entering a left-hand bend, Dale's right-hand rear tyre blew. This sent his car into a stone wall followed by a 360-degree spin.

Fortunately, Dale was OK other than the jolt to his arm causing his osteoarthritis to flare up.

The external damage to his vehicle was not as bad as might be expected given the circumstances but was still sufficient to end its participation on this trip. A flatbed truck was summoned from the Barossa, and the car returned to Dale's workshop.

While I was taking photographs of Dale's car being loaded onto the truck, I noticed it was exactly a year to the day since I had photographed Dale's car being loaded onto a truck outside of Ballarat. That was the previous National Convention where his fan belt had jumped off and the engine cooked itself.

We placed Dale in Alan's passenger seat, and Dale's luggage in the rear hatch of my C4 and on my passenger seat.

Continuing our journey, we took the ferry across the river at Swan Reach. I am not sure how busy it gets, but we timed it perfectly in terms of it being on our side of the river and only one other car driving onto it as we pulled up.

Eventually we got to Mildura. We stopped at Aussie Disposals, where Alan had arranged to collect some new shoes. We then stopped at Hudak's Bakery for lunch. I had a pepper pie, a slice of orange cake, and a Coke.

After lunch we pressed on towards Hay. This leg was uneventful.

After checking in at the Bidgee Motor Inn, we went to the New Crown Hotel for dinner. I had the mixed grill and several beers. Distance travelled: 698km

Thursday 28 March: Hay to Canberra

Today we set off for Canberra, via Narrandera and Junee.

Narrandera was hosting a Hot Rod convention over Easter, and various fancy vehicles were driving about the town while we were there.

Morning tea was had at The Narrandera Bakery. I had a pepper pie and a lemon squash.

After our victuals, we had a look at the Biplane Museum. Narrandera was home to the RAAF No. 8 Elementary Flying Training School during World War II. A bright yellow Tiger Moth resides in a room next to the Visitor Centre, along with various photographs, documents, and paraphernalia from the period.

Leaving Narrandera, we set off for Junee.

We stopped at the Junee Roundhouse Railway Museum. As the name might suggest, the Roundhouse is a circular brick building surrounding a 100-foot train turntable. Built in the mid-1940s, the Roundhouse was the largest train turntable in the Southern Hemisphere, with repair bays for 42 trains. Half of the roundhouse is still used for servicing trains, while the other half has been converted into a museum. There was an excellent assortment of steam and diesel trains in the museum, with most able to be entered by visitors.

Toward the end of our visit, I overheard two of the museum staff discussing how nice Alan's Stingray was and how my "Camaro" was "a bit shit". I bit my tongue.

We then headed to Canberra, passing through Cootamundra and Harden.

We knew we had reached the outskirts of Canberra when the traffic slowed significantly.

After checking in at the Pavilion on Northbourne and getting settled in, we went for a walk and a bite to eat. We ended up at a burger place in China Town (Dickson) called Hello Harry. We got the 'burger and beer' deal. I elected to have a chicken burger.

Distance travelled: 495km

Friday 29 March: Sightseeing in Canberra

This morning we went for a cruise around Canberra and surrounds.

Canberra 2024 cont.



The first stop was Mount Ainslie lookout and aviation beacon. The aviation beacon was erected in 1929 to provide navigation assistance to Canberra Airport, which is located just to the East of Mount Ainslie.

We then drove past Parliament House.

After that we went to Black Mountain where the Telstra Tower is located. The tower provides TV, radio, mobile, and Internet communications to most of Canberra. Unfortunately, the tower and its observation decks have been closed to the public since 2020.

After that we stopped at the Civic Pub for lunch. I had fish and chips and beer.

Returning to the hotel, we caught up with the other SA Club members who had just arrived.

Dinner was finger food provided by the hotel and arranged by the Not-The-Nationals organisers. I had a miniature cheeseburger, a miniature crumbed prawn, and a party pie. Exciting stuff.

Distance travelled: Unknown

[Not-The-Nationals Occurs]

Monday 1 April: Canberra to Albury

Today we set off from Canberra. I quite enjoyed the crisp air and morning fog as we headed toward Cooma.

We stopped briefly in Cooma while Alan went to the Visitor Information Centre to enquire about ticketed access to the National Park. We headed to Jindabyne, where we took a 40km (or so) detour to Charlotte Pass, which is part of Perisher Valley and Kosciuszko National Park. After a fun winding drive up the hill, we took in some amazing views of the valley and the surrounding ranges.

Driving out of Kosciuszko, the ABS in my car failed and the brake pedal was basically flopping about uselessly. I discovered this on a bend where I needed to use the brakes, of course. After catching up to Alan and Dale, we stopped for 10 or 15 minutes to allow things to cool down. After some advice from Alan, I drove the rest of the way out of there treating the automatic like a manual and letting engine braking do its thing.

We continued toward Albury, crossing into Victoria and travelling through Colac and Bonegilla, before crossing back over the border into New South Wales and stopping at the Hume Dam.

The Hume Dam is a major dam across the Murray River, downstream of its junction with the Mitta River. Constructed in the 1920s and 30s, the dam's purpose includes hydroelectricity supply, water supply, and flood prevention. It is quite an impressive concrete and steel structure.

We then checked into the Astor Hotel. The hotel had its own pub. I had a cheeseburger and chips and beer for dinner.

Between parking our cars to check in to the hotel and relocating them to our hotel room doors, Alan's car wouldn't start, but then fired up. Alan reported a strange scraping noise coming from his vehicle. He also reported some overdrive slippage.

Distance travelled: 526km

Tuesday 2 April: Albury to Horsham

Today we set out from Albury, heading to Horsham.

Rather than take the usual highways — and deal with their usual traffic — today's goal was to take the road less travelled. This was actually the goal for much of the trip to and from Canberra, but today it was the most evident.

Aiming to be at Echuca for lunch, we crisscrossed the New South Wales and Victorian border, going through Corowa (NSW), Yarrowonga (Victoria), Nathalia (Victoria), and Moama (NSW). At one point we had to perform a U-turn, as the road abruptly changed to gravel.

Arriving in Echuca, we found somewhere to park and walked to the Beechworth Bakery. I purchased a pepper pie and a lemon coconut slice thing, which was consumed upstairs on their balcony.

After lunch we walked down to the river port and looked at the museum. Built in the mid-1860s, the port was the main ship building centre for the river transport industry. In addition to the static museum artifacts, there were some live steam engines operating, as well as various paddle boats on the river.

Leaving Echuca, we travelled to Horsham via Charlton, Donald, and Minyip. At least one stretch of road we travelled on contained only one car-width worth of bitumen. Upon encountering an oncoming truck or caravan, we would drop the left-hand wheels into the dirt shoulder before moving back into the centre of the road. It is safe to say that many of the roads we travelled today we experienced for the first time, and we will likely never travel them again.

Upon arriving at Horsham, we checked into the Horsham Motel. We walked to the Horsham Sports & Community Club for dinner. I had a porterhouse steak and chips and beer for dinner.

On closing the venetian blind in my motel room at bedtime, I discovered somebody had graffitied "EAT SHIT & DIE DOG" on one of the slats. On waking, I discovered motel staff hadn't provided flannels, towels, or a bathmat. I found both incidents somewhat amusing.

Distance travelled: 519km

Wednesday 3 April: Horsham to Adelaide

Today we set off for home. A cold and foggy morning; I had to put a jumper on for the first time since the trip began. From Horsham we headed across to Frances, before heading up to Bordertown.

We stopped at Keith and visited the Morning Loaf Bakery. I had an apricot slice. Alan had words with a Police Officer.

Our next stop was Tailem Bend, where we got some petrol. Alan was still hearing scraping noises as well as experiencing some kind of overdrive slippage issue, so he checked his transmission fluid level.

We said our goodbyes and set off for Adelaide.

At the bottom of the South Eastern Freeway, I downshifted into second gear only to hear clunking and banging noises. I made it home, although the car sounded awful every time I moved off from a stop.

This evening happened to coincide with the Corvette Club monthly meeting, so we were able to confirm everybody had made it home safely and I was able to return Dale's luggage.

Distance travelled: 440km

Epilogue

I would like to thank Alan for the effort he put into organising the trip. It was obvious that he had spent considerable time planning the route, identifying interesting places to stop and look around, as well as organising suitable accommodation that was in waddling distance of a pub each night.

I thoroughly enjoyed the road trip. I got the impression Dale did too (despite the rough start).

I have put my name down with the hotel for next year's National Convention in Parkes.

Alan's scraping noise turned out to be the right-hand side inner half-shaft universal joint. "Not a needle to be found, only metal dust...", according to the text he sent me.

Similarly, my clunking and banging noise was the result of a "destroyed" right-hand side inner half-shaft universal joint, along with one of the saddles. I have not seen the mechanic's photos (or the wreckage itself), nor do I know yet whether any other damage was done. I haven't even thought about the brakes.

Alan discovered a nail in Dale's tyre. This may have contributed to a loss in pressure and the bead breaking.

When Dale had his accident, we discovered the RAA will not send a truck for a 'crash', only for a 'breakdown'. This is somewhat disturbing considering many of us will have been RAA members for almost as long as we have been driving.



Destination Palmer



Sunday the 7th April brought to an end daylight saving, the gather round of football and a new destination for our club run, the home of the famous bear on the rock, Palmer. Turns out the hardest part of the day was getting out of the car park at our meeting point on Anzac Highway!. We were already splintered into small groups by the time we reach the bottom of Greenhill Road at Burnside. One of many short stops to re group was made and onwards through the senic Adealide hills to Uraidla, Balhannah, Oakbank then our first stop at Lovells bakery at Woodside. We were able to have a leisurely stop and chat as we were

making good time so far we hadn't encountered the dreaded pest the 'Adelaide Hills Cyclist' a this time. From here it was onto Lobethal, Gumeracha where we flew through the speed camera site a furious speed of 16 kilometres an hour. Then onto some lesser used roads towards Williamstown and into Mount Pleasant. Down the lovely Walkers Flat Road for some flowing corners. By now we were well a head of schedule, we cut across from there to just east of



Palmer on a lovely semi straight bitumen road which allowed some of us to stretch our legs. We quickly took over the lawns and beer garden at the Palmer Hotel and settled in for the afternoon. In all we had 15 Vettes on the run



with many first time attendees and some old familiar faces. My assistant coordinator milked his hand injury for all it was worth with Catherine cutting up his lunch and feeding him !. Thanks to our host Jade and her staff at the pub with their friendly can do attitude with a smile, the meals were great as usual. In all we covered around a 110 kilometres with out incident, we encountered 2 sets of mobile red lights for road works !. All in all a short but great run.





Parked up at the Palmer





Day at the Palmer



Collingrove Hill Climb 21/4/24

The day started a little fresh, but with the sun shining and blue skies ahead the early start was easy, driving down to OTR at Bolivar. This was the meeting point for

11 other Corvette owners that were ready for some highway cruising and something a little different to other club runs, involving the Sporting Car Club of SA. The route was set through Tanunda for a pickup of one of our regional members and then on to



Angaston and Collingrove Hill Climb in the Barossa Valley for a variety of Motor-sport viewing including some track time experience for those who participated. That

all too familiar Chevrolet noise was happening just as we arrived with our new club president Sean warming up the C4 affectionately known as the Black Bitch for



a climb by making lots of free revving noise, burning rubber in the pits and letting all the club members know he meant business. It was by far the best

sounding car in the field and made the rabbits shake in their burrows.

Lunch time provided some courageous members track time to experience the drivers views on the circuit and I'm sure all participants enjoyed this opportunity to warm up those tyres and run their Vette's through a narrow winding course to the top of the hill in their record times.

Thank you to all members that turned up and made the effort for a good showing by our club to support Kirsty and Sean on the day.

Write up by Serge



STRATHALBYN SHOW N SHINE

The meeting place for our run to strath started at Frewville foodland shopping centre at 8.00am with a departure time at 8.30am with our cruise up the freeway through our lovely Adelaide Hills to Mt Barker onto wistow and ending up at Strathalbyn neighbourhood centre and as usual several members had arrived at the starting point earlier than us, good job guys. Parking the vette we where greet-



ed by Tim and Dave, parked side by side in there C4s, I was unsure about how many members would turn up so we waited until 8.30, as the time arrived we decided that we would return to our cars as it seemed likely on more members would arrive, with that off we go up the freeway to Mt Barker, I preplanned to pick up serge&Jo

and wayne&sue in the main street ,with that we arrived at 8.50 but they arrived at 8.52 as maxwell smart used to say missed by that much haa then I noticed that Dave had fallen way behind so pulling over to the side of the road waiting for him to catch up ,it didn't take long but no sign of the others so I got on the phone to serge ,we decide to drive on and they would meet up at Strathalbyn. On arriving at the neighbourhood centre David daw ,allan& Jan orchard had already parked on the lawn so

the only thing to do was to join in the centre stage ,serge&Jo, wayne&sue also turned up minutes later great ,then colin&cyndy Dennis joined in our little show and shine ,in total there where 14 members and 8 vettes it didn't take long before the locals gathered around taking snapshots of different types



of corvettes even the local newspaper reporter got in on the act getting members into groups its a Kodak moment . As usual maeyln was busy in the kitchen making scones with jam and cream and a hot cup of coffee or tea, time got away from us so we all found a seat and mal the administrator thanked us all for coming to help the centres fund raising efforts he then spoke of the programs that help locals stay in touch with everyone through out the district, such little things as manging money, budgeting for food ect ,he also hopes to get a bus shuttle service running next year good luck



mal we wish you all the best ,I forgot to mention mal is a very good chef having cooked our lunch and salads with plenty to go round thanks mal. In closing Maelyn and I would like to thank everyone that come on board for the day and hope you all had fun doing it thanks . Written by Graeme walker photos David daw.